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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/522,866	09/26/2005	Hong Ning Philip Cheng	7224P004	5240

8791

7590

03/05/2008

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EXAMINER

JOHNSON, KEVIN M

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

1793

MAIL DATE

DELIVERY MODE

03/05/2008

PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/522,866

Applicant(s)

CHEANG ET AL.

Examiner

KEVIN M. JOHNSON

Art Unit

1793

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 12/14/2007.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-5 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-5 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SF/ICE)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 12/14/2007.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

10/522866

DETAILED ACTION

Information Disclosure Statement

1. The information disclosure statement (IDS) submitted on 12/14/2007 is in compliance with the provisions of 37 CFR 1.97. Accordingly, the information disclosure statement is being considered by the examiner.

Claim Objections

2. Claims 3 and 4 are objected to because of the following informalities: the term alloyed is used but is inappropriate in this case because the materials do not comprise metals. Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

5. This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

6. Claims 1-5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kumar et al. (Journal of Materials Processing 113 (2001) p.456-462) in view of Nagarajan et al. (Journal of Materials Chemistry 1993 3(1) p.43-51).

In regards to claims 1-5, Kumar teaches a method of producing an ultra-fine hydroxyapatite (HA) powder comprising the steps of producing a HA suspension and then subjecting the HA suspension to a radio frequency (RF) plasma spraying. The HA suspension is produced using a wet-chemical approach by reacting orthophosphoric acid with calcium hydroxide. Kumar's process can be adjusted to produce powders with particle sizes of 10 nm-4 μ m, a correlation between the particle size and the plate power used in the spraying step was observed (p. 458, column 2).

While Kumar fails to teach a zirconia-HA composite powder, Nagarajan teaches that the addition of zirconia to HA yields a composite that has improved properties (p. 50, column 2). The zirconia is added in amounts of 20 and 30 wt.-%, (sample ZAP-30, table 1).

It would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time of the invention to add zirconia as taught by Nagarajan to the HA solution sprayed by Kumar. This modification would have been motivated by the teaching of Nagarajan that HA-zirconia composites yield improved mechanical properties over pure HA. A particle size of less than 200 nm would be achieved as a result of routing optimization of the plate power in the spraying process. One skilled in the art would have further found it obvious that traces of calcium phosphate would have been present in the finished particles as a result of partial decomposition of the HA in the spraying process.

Response to Arguments

7. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-3 been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Applicant's argument that Radio Frequency Plasma Spraying is not the same as the plasma spraying process taught by the Khor prior art relied upon in the previous rejection is persuasive. Due to this finding, the previous rejection is not sufficient and a new non-final rejection is required as the scope of the claims has not been changed.

Conclusion

8. All claims are rejected. No claims are allowed.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to KEVIN M. JOHNSON whose telephone number is (571)270-3584. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday 7:30 AM to 5:00pm.

Art Unit: 1793

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Jerry Lorengo can be reached on 571-272-1233. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

KMJ

/Jerry A Lorengo/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 1793